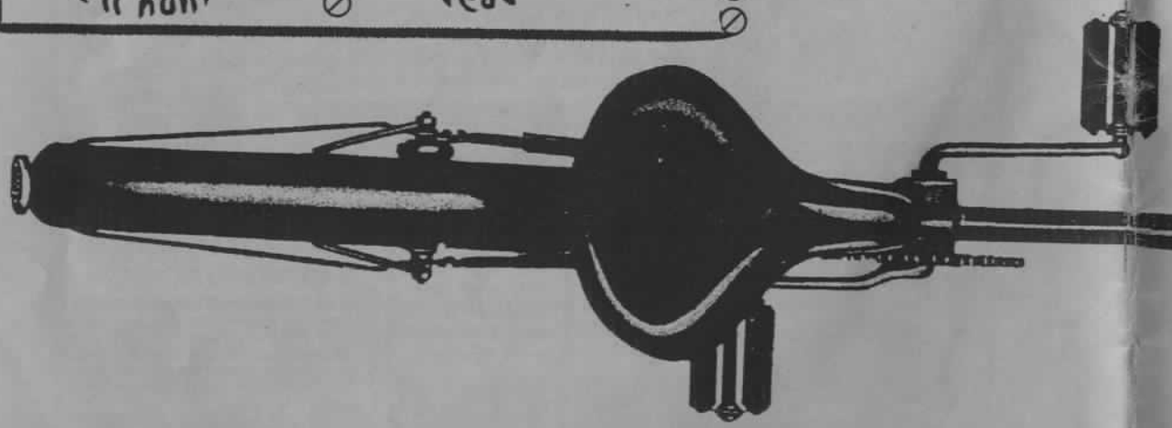
so i was watching the news monday night about how we should bomb.

we'll hunt them down.

so they convinved me but then tuesday they were selling the same war to me. and again on wednes.

dead or alive.



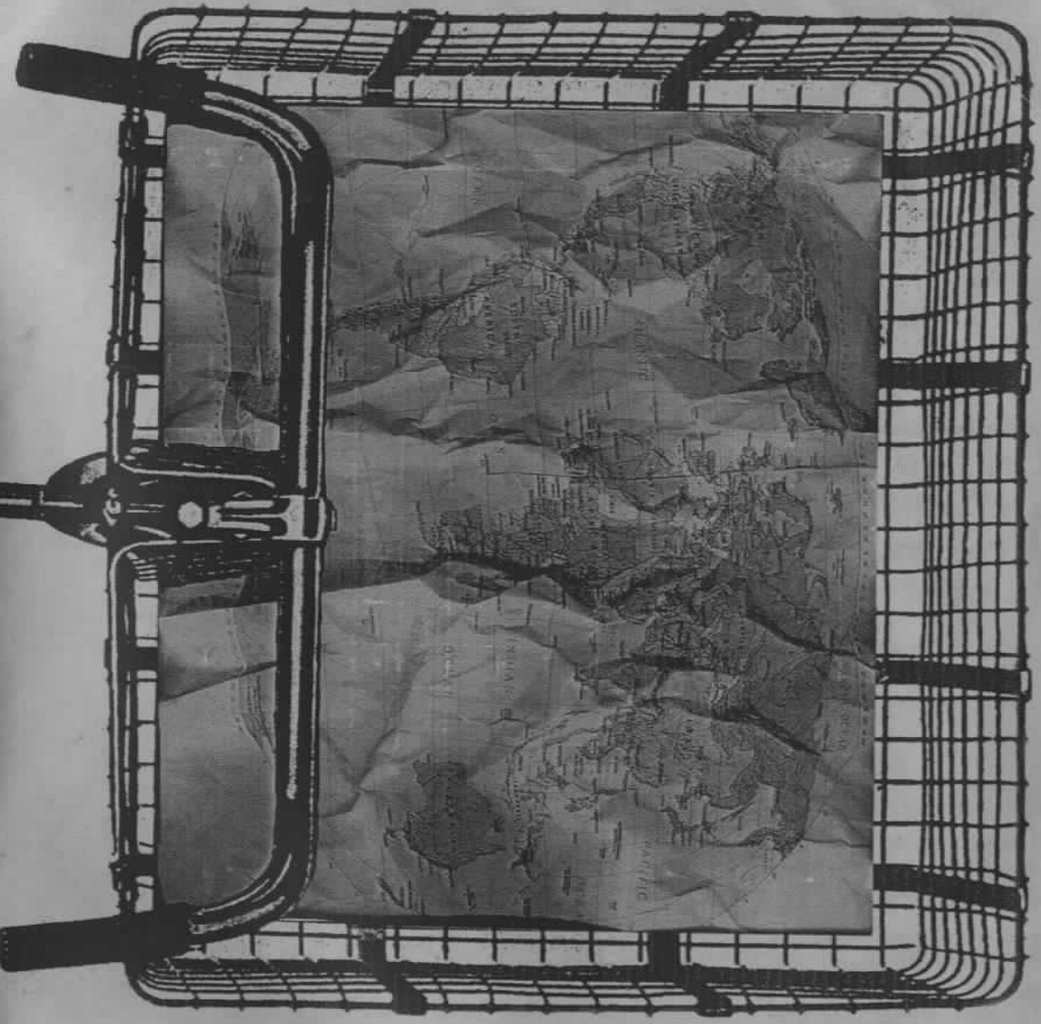
by friday, i stopped watching the news. i figured if they want to bomb somebody, go ahead, but dont bother me about it. so rude.

totally

now i just watch the 24 hour sports channel. i like highlights.

i wanna see the new england patriots against them evildoers. boom! pow! wham! wham! they'd show them.

OPERATION: COURIER



LONDON - SAN FRANCISCO - PORTLAND - BUENOS AIRES

SPRING 2002

Lets go get lunch.
can we do mexican?
No, i'd rather go to Taco Bell.
The one at the gas station or the walmart?
I'll have the special. 6 beef tacos and a roll of toilet paper.
THAT'LL BE $2.99 SIR WOULD YOU LIKE SOME MARKETING GIMMICKS WITH THAT?
I'll take a plastic one.

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INTRODUCTION: WHAT'S THE POINT?

The potential of messengers is awesome. Messengers interact with more people of different occupations than nearly any other worker around, and know the city better than most anyone. Corporations, banks, ad agencies, brokerage firms, lawyers, government agencies, dot-coms, building contractors, to name a few, rely on the messenger in order to conduct their business. All workers have power in that when we refuse (collectively) to do our work, the work doesn't get done. Messengers, though, are situated in the capitalist economy in such a way that, if organized toward action, can have a particularly widespread impact on business-as-usual. Despite capitalists' reliance on messenger service, messengers generally make just enough to scrape by and get treated with little respect from the boss and others.

There's nothing stopping messengers from demanding more, except cynicism and disbelief. Disbelief in our ability to coordinate strategically and disbelief in the potency of collective action. These (dis)beliefs serve only those who profit from our labor. As workers, we can either continue to accept living at the mercy of bosses and corporations that exploit us, or we can explore our power, take calculated risks, and act strategically to make gains. The latter is not only the choice which shows self-respect, it is imperative.

The current state of the world leaves no illusions about where warmongers and corporate interests are willing to lead this planet. The events of 9/11 are being used to justify anything and everything that elite powergrabbers desire, and that ain't good for nobody but them. In it's drive to create fear within us all, the U.S. propaganda machine hopes to scare us into silence and submission.

In the name of patriotism and safety, we are supposed to support the bombing of Afghanistan (and whatever country is chosen as the next target) and the driving of millions of Afghans out of their homes and into starvation, accept more surveillance and more armed patrolling of public (what's left of it) and private space, NOT ask questions especially regarding history, accept layoffs as our patriotic sacrifice and feel lucky we have a job (if we have one). We're certainly not supposed to strike or make demands on our bosses -- come on, these are lean times.

While the recession is a reality and unemployment is rising, hundreds of billions of dollars are spent militarizing the globe in the interest of U.S. corporate elites, and even executives of bankrupt corporations like Enron are still making truckloads of cash. Corporations have no loyalty to workers and neither do most messenger companies. Yeah, things are different since 9/11, but not that different: capitalism still reigns -- profit is still the driving force (no matter the cost.

Americans have been quiet for too long! We play a special role in making or breaking the empire of which we are a central part. our silence will allow for the eventual destruction of the planet. our resistance has the possibility of creating a life much better than the one we know now — free, sustainable, and healthy for all people. Imagine what is possible.

Which brings us to the reason for this publication. What unfolds in these pages is a sense of possibility, with messengers at the center. The experiences of messengers organizing in San Francisco, Portland, and London against the bosses, and in Argentina against the government, are inspiring and instructive. These messengers have imagined something better.

LONDON COURIERS SAY "STRIKE"

"The Couriers Are Revolting" is the name of an exciting booklet put out by London Messengers who were part of a messenger run union, Despatch Industry Workers Union (DIWU). The DIWU was a direct action union that operated between 1989 and 1992. The booklet is full of great organizing info, terrific analysis, and hilarious tidbits regarding different actions they took. The following is a small excerpt of this booklet:

6 Say it with picketing

The "right to strike" is the fundamental safeguard to prevent us slipping into a slave society. The "right to assembly" (i.e. unionise) is embodied in the United Nations Charter of Human Rights. The only way to have an effective strike is to have picket lines to prevent scabbing. Despite police provocation and what the media say picket lines need not be just areas of violence and mayhem. So picketing, seen in this context, becomes an activity to be proud of which can improve your lot and safeguard your rights.

It has always been in the DIWU Constitution and on every membership card that workers should never cross picket lines, unless the strikers consent. This statement was probably too hard hitting for many couriers, and may have put off some from joining, but we wanted the DIWU to have honourable principles or none at all.

Dennis: *One courier, when given Despatches, argued that the purpose of the despatch industry was to provide a delivery service for companies or the Post Office when their workers went on strike! (i.e. rent-a-scab) I should have just whacked him.*

Since 1979 it is probably more common for workers to say that they must cross a picket line or they will be sacked. The founders of the DIWU wanted to challenge this attitude. In some ways it was a bold step because nobody has less job security than a self-employed despatch rider in the 1990's. On the other hand, it wasn't so bold because at the time it was easy to get another courier job, without references, within a day or two of getting sacked. In the beginning some of us were a bit worried about getting the sack, but now we consider it a badge of honour!

Consequently DIWU members refused to cross picket lines on numerous occasions. For example, Alan refused to cross a picket line at a striking factory in Dagenham, Rajiv refused to cross one during a BBC strike at the Aldwych, and ....

Adam: *I twice refused to cross picket lines at VNU publishers in Broadwick Street and once at the Daily Telegraph in Docklands. None of us got the sack. The bosses and the customers seemed to accept "can't cross picket lines" better than most of our fellow workers. I wonder if this is because in the bosses minds they think strike-breaking requires armoured buses and thousands of cops, as used so brutally against the miners, the printers, and others.*

One courier called Joe, who worked at ADC, briefly joined the Union, then over a few pints described how he had been one of the strike-breakers at Wapping (during the printers dispute). He proudly told us that his boss said it was the motorcyclists who had kept Wapping running by bringing in photos, news, etc. Joe said he originally felt sympathetic towards the sacked printers until someone threw a brick at him, which supposedly make him more determined to cross the picket line. It had nothing to do with being paid the scabbing bonus of course! Anyway we politely told him we were on the other side with the sacked printers at Wapping. He never came to another DIWU meeting, the poor lonely soul.

In hindsight, when in dispute with a courier company DIWU's tactics should have been to picket the customers premises not the courier company's. There is almost no point in picketing the courier company because all the work is given out over the radio or by phone. But a bunch of hairy-arsed couriers making a racket outside the precious toffee-nosed customers addresses would soon have the courier bosses begging for mercy. If the situation got too heavy with the police we just disappear in different directions on our bikes then re-appear at another customers address and start again! This is, officially, known as Secondary Picketing which the toadies in parliament declared illegal. But rules are for breaking, right?!

Lastly, although not exactly on the subject of picket lines, there existed for years an informal boycott of South Africa House during the apartheid era. We never heard of any courier delivering there, only refusing to go there, which was heart-warming.

Published in 2000
for more info contact:
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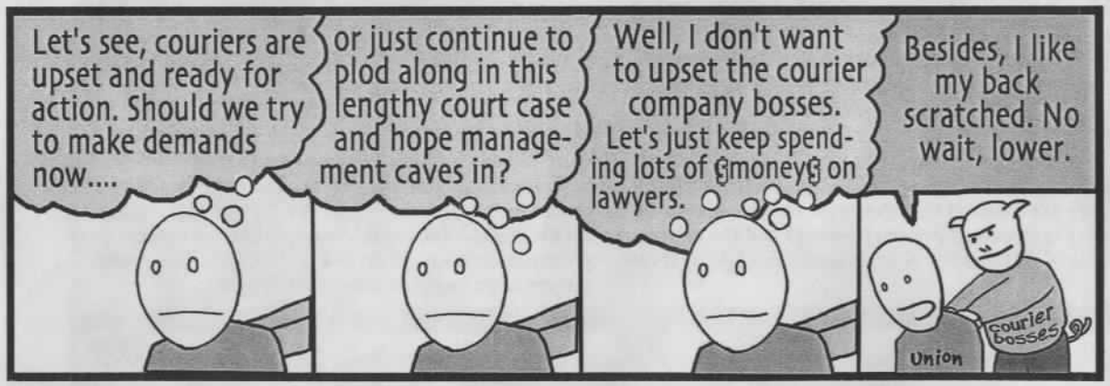
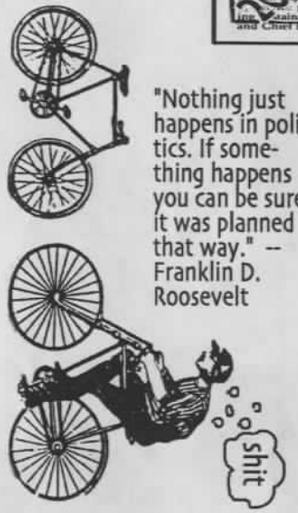
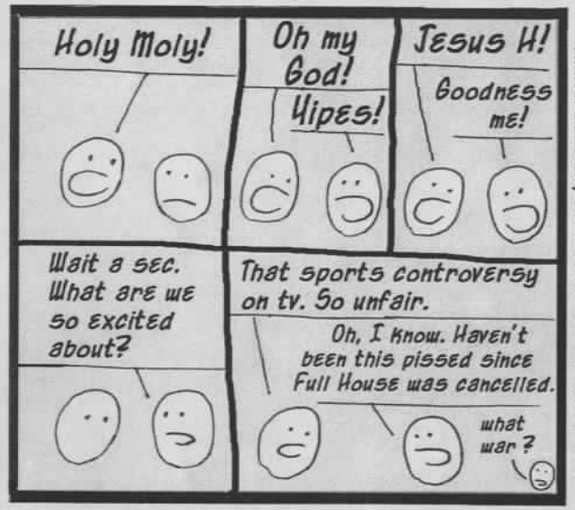
ISBN 1-873605-67-6


Let's see, couriers are upset and ready for action. Should we try to make demands now....
or just continue to plod along in this lengthy court case and hope management caves in?
Well, I don't want to upset the courier company bosses. Let's just keep spending lots of $money$ on lawyers.
Besides, I like my back scratched. No wait, lower.
courier bosses
Union

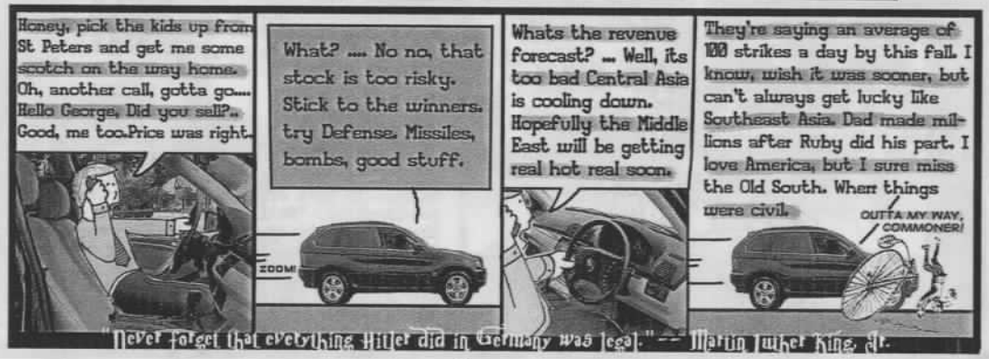
"I believe that banking institutions are more dangerous to our liberties than standing armies... if the American people ever allow private banks to control the issue of currency...the banks and corporations that will grow up around them will deprive the people of all property until their children will wake up homeless on the continent that their fathers conquered."
--Thomas Jefferson



"Nothing just happens in politics. If something happens you can be sure it was planned that way." -- Franklin D. Roosevelt


Holy Moly!
Oh my God! Yipes!
Jesus H! Goodness me!
Wait a sec. What are we so excited about?
That sports controversy on tv. So unfair.
Oh, I know. Haven't been this pissed since Full House was cancelled.
what war?

"Our job is to give people not what they want, but what we decide they ought to have."
-- Richard Salent, Former President CBS News.


Honey, pick the kids up from St Peters and get me some scotch on the way home. Oh, another call, gotta go.... Hello George, Did you sell?.. Good, me too.Price was right.
What? .... No no, that stock is too risky. Stick to the winners. try Defense. Missiles, bombs, good stuff.
ZOOM!
Whats the revenue forecast? ... Well, its too bad Central Asia is cooling down. Hopefully the Middle East will be getting real hot real soon.
They're saying an average of 100 strikes a day by this fall. I know, wish it was sooner, but can't always get lucky like Southeast Asia. Dad made millions after Ruby did his part. I love America, but I sure miss the Old South. When things were civil.
OUTTA MY WAY, COMMONER!
Never forget that everything Hitler did in Germany was legal." -- Martin Luther King, Jr.

BUENOS AIRES MESSENGERS TAKE ON MORE THAN THE BOSSES !!

In the following article, motorcycle messengers in Buenos Aires describe their experiences on the frontlines of the recent massive protests in Argentina. Tens of thousands of people, including a movement of unemployed folks, are outraged and in the streets. The vital role that the messengers of Buenos Aires have been playing in this crisis is a testament to the power of messengers everywhere.

The economy of Argentina is near complete collapse and the country has seen a quick succession of presidents and economic ministers in the last few months. The country's debt is out of control due to years of falling down the IMF's money-lending black hole. Recent figures show the unemployment level at 22% while the government continues to slash social spending.

What follows is a translated excerpt of an article written in early January 2002, from "Pagina 12", a newspaper in Argentina. The content is awesome, even if the wording isn't the clearest:

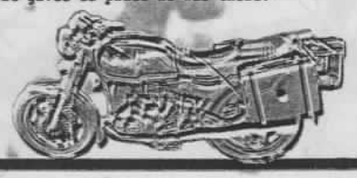
REBELLION ON TWO WHEELS

The motorcycle messengers circulate every day through downtown with legal documents and mailings. During the protests with pots and pans that eliminated the regimes of Cavallo [Economy Minister] and De la Rua [President] and the brutal police repression afterwards, they joined the protests playing an unpublicized role: distributing water, removing people from the police batons, and searching for ambulances.

They rode with the rebellion on two wheels. Initially disorganized, later coordinated, the motorcycle messengers became roaring angels for those who marched on December 20th, distributing water, and lemons and hope. They provided first aid and looked for ambulances when the emergency ambulance service did not show up. The messengers (many belonging to the Simeca Union, the Union of Messengers and Deliverers) played an important role in the events which ended the De la Rua government.

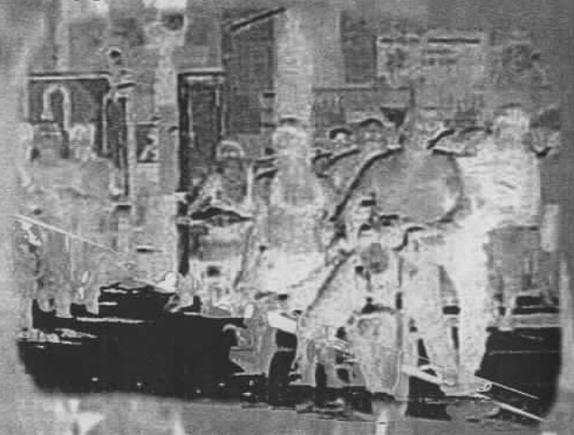
Five motorcyclists: Javi, Seba, Chiquita, el Pajaro Loco, and el Pelado were on the front lines. They tell, without giving their real names, the role of the Simeca Union and their preparations against the police. They also want to refute the false rumors, first, that their participation was not spontaneous. And second, that they were not real messengers.

Javi, one of the founders of the Simeca Union, shows us where rubber bullets hit him in the left leg. He talks about Gaston Riva, a 30 year old motorcyclist who the police killed on his own corner. Riva parked his Honda CG125 on Avenida Nayo and Avenida de Julio Nueve. "They killed him with a shot to the forehead. This was his corner, his stand. He was with the people and we suffered his death. But it gives us pride he was there."



Chiquita, besides delivering envelopes, is a chronic student of sociology at the University of Buenos Aires. When you see him, you realize his nickname is ironic. He edited the communique that was distributed on December 21 which was about those who died in the demonstrations. It was called, "There's Been Enough Robbing". It said, among other things: "We are left with an uncontrollable police who are into hyper-violence, with nothing to rein in their frustrations over the people."

The Wednesday before, the messengers had met together because the 11 messenger companies had not paid them. "Moto Viamonte, Quickly, El Mensajero Veloz and Motornorte are companies that get 200,000 pesos a month. We know because we do the paperwork for payment," Chiquita the big guy assures us.



When De la Rua finished talking on TV we got together and started a pots and pans demonstration," says the Pajaro Loco. He arrived in the Plaza de Nayo (in front of the Presidential Palace) and drove into the middle of the tear gas. "In the beginning we thought it was just us banging pots. We started driving through the neighborhood and there was more and more noise."

Tonight the Simeca Union had a meeting in the hall of Hijos (an organization of the sons and daughters of political prisoners killed by military dictatorship). The meeting place is not an accident. Seba belongs to both organizations. He describes how he got involved, "Until I came to Hijos I wasn't clear about the military and the 30,000 who disappeared. I began to read. I'm from a family of those who say "Don't get involved, there's some reason why." Here I learnt what the struggle was about. I went into the street as a Hijo and as a Messenger.

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

El Pelado says there was another unidentified messenger killed and there were also many messengers wounded with rubber bullets. Another companero was killed in La Ferrere. Two kids ended up with bullets in their heads.

THE NIGHT WE DID NOT GO TO BED

After the first tear gas, the running, and the first rocks Wednesday night, the motorcyclists remained on the street. A city about to boil up with the dawn. They marched on Congress, but in spite of the repression the people did not leave. "We went from street to street, plaza to plaza trying to resist during the night," says Javi.

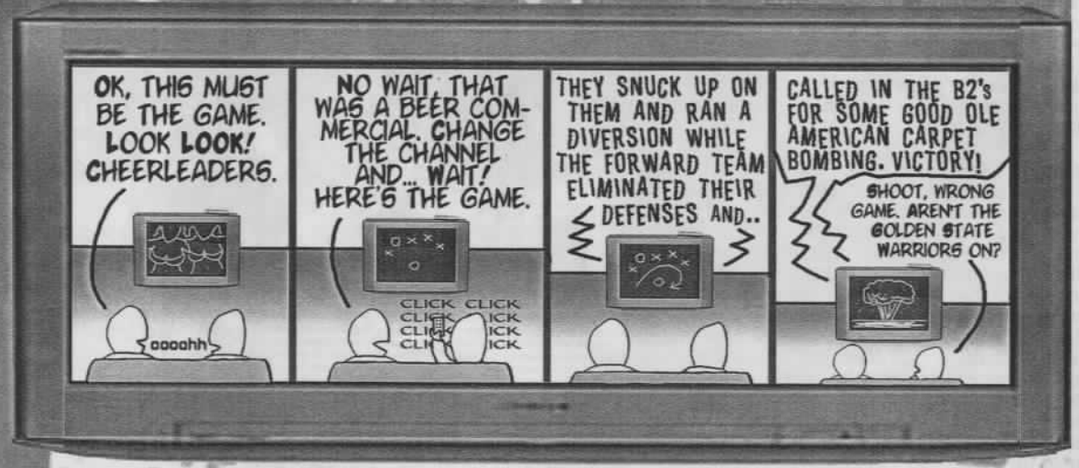
According to the last census, there are 58,000 delivery workers in Buenos Aires. (The delivery workers do not yet belong to the Simeca Union). That Thursday, thousands of messengers and deliverers went to work. But downtown was under siege. There was no way to get in. "I went to Dock Sud to pick up a package. When I saw they were throwing tear gas and hitting the kids, I got mad so I stayed."

There were no banners from the Simeca Union, no trade union call. The only thing that united them was their motorcycles, their instrument of work. It was the means to get downtown (or what was left of it) and avoid the repression, or go to the front. "In the beginning we got together three groups of 40 motorcycles. "The police stopped repressing when we appeared. We were about 150 feet from the police."

The coordination began when the news came of the first wounded messenger. "We went to all the messenger agencies. We told the workers to come out with us because they had killed a messenger. Many hooked onto us until there were 100 motorcycles." We appeared on Avenida de Mayo. They shot 40 people...."On Belgrano Street and Avenida de Julio Nueve, I saw a tank crushing everything --trees, gratings-- and from above someone was shooting a 9mm gun." According to Seba, "The messengers in this battle went beyond the trade union role completely. With our motorcycles, we could do more than people on foot. The police didn't know what to do. They weren't sure who we were. They were threatened by something new."The messengers have a magazine, "Messengers in Struggle". They march against repression with the unemployed movement and have won a battle. There was a move to expel them from downtown. "The justification was we were making the city ugly to foreign investors," says Chiquita.

On December 28th, the day President Saa fell, the messengers appeared together and were applauded by the people demonstrating with pots and pans. "It should be really clear that since the 20th, we are continually being persecuted in the center. They are looking for us." But also people stop to thank them, "If you had not let me know the police were coming, I would have been arrested." "If you hadn't got me out of that mess, I would have eaten a bullet." "I was choking with tear gas."

The Simeca Union has a card it has not yet played. "We handle the money of the messenger companies.... We handle the accounts. One day we will stop downtown because we still demand justice for our dead."


OK, THIS MUST BE THE GAME. LOOK LOOK! CHEERLEADERS.
aaaahh
NO WAIT. THAT WAS A BEER COMMERCIAL. CHANGE THE CHANNEL AND... WAIT! HERE'S THE GAME.
CLICK CLICK
THEY SNUCK UP ON THEM AND RAN A DIVERSION WHILE THE FORWARD TEAM ELIMINATED THEIR DEFENSES AND..
CALLED IN THE B2's FOR SOME GOOD OLE AMERICAN CARPET BOMBING. VICTORY!
SHOOT, WRONG GAME. AREN'T THE GOLDEN STATE WARRIORS ON?

FLASH MESSENGER STRIKE: A MIXED BAG

A YEAR AGO, on January 9, 2001 eleven of the 12 bike messengers at Flash went on strike for increased pay and improved working conditions. Flash Messengers were making an average of $1.75 for a downtown tag and because of discounts to the clients that were taken from the messengers' pockets, payouts were sometimes even lower. Messengers would work their asses off for up to eleven hours and for as little as $80. They received no benefits of any kind. The owners of Flash, like other strike-deserving companies, turn a profit by selling messenger labor for peanuts, and in so doing, help to drive down standards for all messengers.

The strike began after Flash management refused to negotiate the demands the messengers presented on that rainy Tuesday morning. Throughout that week Flash messengers urged clients to stand by them, rallied substantial support from the wider messenger community, and sought concessions from their bosses. On Friday, management locked them out and began forming a scab crew.

Flash messenger is now a considerably better place to work because of the strike and months of continued pressure. Most of the messengers who work there now are the same people who undermined the strike by working at Flash despite requests by strikers to go elsewhere for work. According to these same scabs, Flash Messenger now pays $12 per hour guarantees and increased waiting time rates, and outfits their "replacement workers" with spiffy new courier bags. What's fucked up is that the benefits have gone to those who undermined the strike and not to the strong messengers who made the sacrifice.

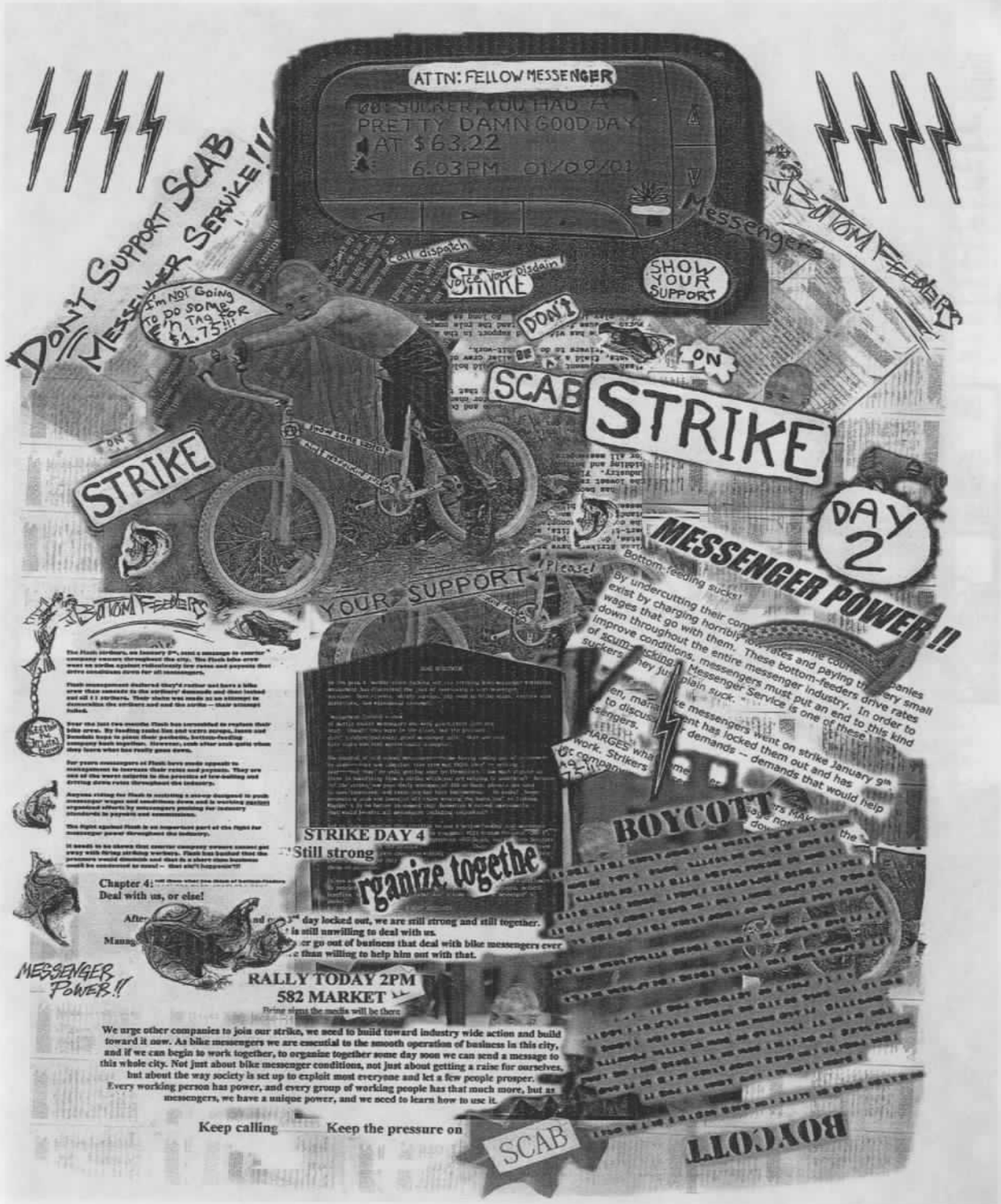
Flash management was handing out extra cash to scabs in the first month after the strike hit. And in a letter to Speedway management (after an altercation involving a Speedway messenger and a scab), Flash management stated that it was hiring ex-cons with short fuses as scabs. In fact, Flash management was unable to hold onto anyone else because of pressure from the messenger community on the street. In less than three months over 20 new hires quit when they got wind of the situation.

One of the biggest flaws in the Flash strike was the absence of a picket or even a visible presence after the first week of the strike. If there had been such a presence Flash management would have found it much more difficult getting on with business. As it was, the scabs, in most instances, didn't get accurate information until they were on the job. Pro-strikers were playing an unnecessary game of catch-up when they should have been putting the screws to Flash. The lack of a picket was a big psychological win for Flash management. If the strikers had drawn on the high level of support from the messenger community a presence outside of Flash and the offices of major clients could have been organized, and quite possibly, the entire course of the strike would have been different. The lock-out could have been made to backfire on the bosses.

Another big flaw was the lack of driver involvement. In a strike action the point is to amass as much power against the boss as possible. Every messenger strike in the past several years has been weakened by the fact that vehicle messengers -who bring in big money for the companies- have not been brought into the fight in big numbers. In the case of the Flash strike, there wasn't even an effort to bring them in.

Flash strikers organized themselves. They saw no reason to involve themselves with an official union and believed their collective power was more important and more expedient than formal union recognition. The experiences of the Flash strike and other messenger strikes can play a role in conducting more successful strikes in the future (the near future hopefully).

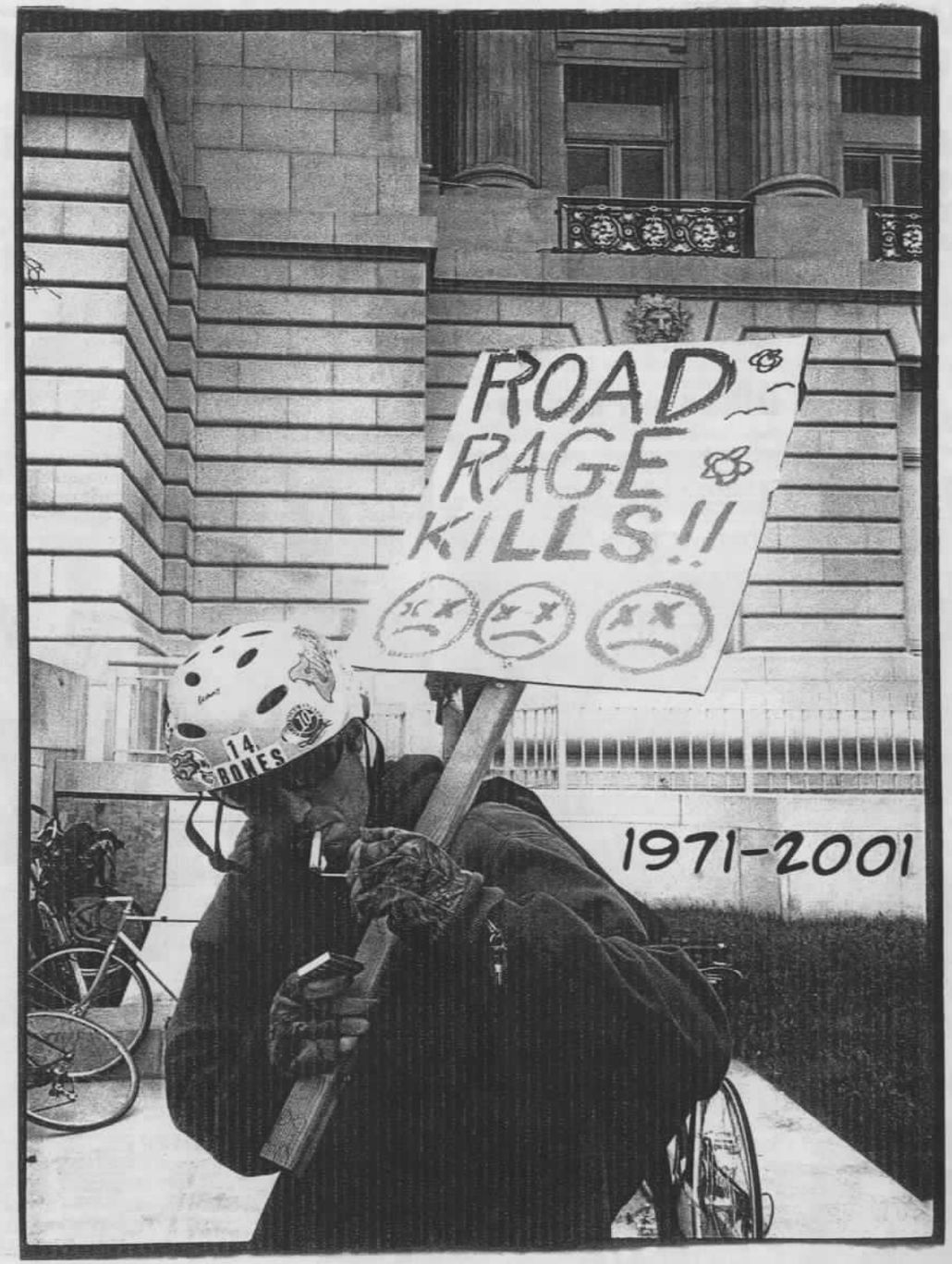
Messengers in San Francisco can organize and win. With some effort it **IS** possible. Ignoring the potential of collective power will get messengers nowhere slowly. Messenger companies are empty shells without couriers, and messengers are strongest when the bosses know, from experience, that their work-force is prepared to act collectively on its own behalf.


ATTN: FELLOW MESSENGER
AT $63.22
6.03PM 01/09/01
Don't Support SCAB Messenger Service!!!
I'm NOT Going To DO SOME Tag FOR $1.75!!!
Messengers
BOTTOM FEEDERS
SHOW YOUR SUPPORT
DON'T
ON STRIKE
SCAB
STRIKE
DAY 2
MESSENGER POWER!!
Please!
YOUR SUPPORT
BOTTOM FEEDERS
STRIKE DAY 4
Still strong
rganize togethe
Chapter 4:
Deal with us, or else!
MESSENGER POWER!!
RALLY TODAY 2PM
582 MARKET
We urge other companies to join our strike, we need to build toward industry wide action and build toward it now. As bike messengers we are essential to the smooth operation of business in this city, and if we can begin to work together, to organize together some day soon we can send a message to this whole city. Not just about bike messenger conditions, not just about getting a raise for ourselves, but about the way society is set up to exploit most everyone and let a few people prosper. Every working person has power, and every group of working people has that much more, but as messengers, we have a unique power, and we need to learn how to use it.
Keep calling
Keep the pressure on
SCAB
BOYCOTT
BOYCOTT

BOSS DUDE, HERE IS A PETITION US WORKERS SIGNED. WE DON'T WANT TO BE TREATED LIKE SHIT
PETITION? WHO THE HELL CARES? I CAN'T AFFORD TO PAY MORE THAN $1.50 A TAG. SO TOO BAD, GET BACK TO WORK.
BUT WE...
ENOUGH!
YOU'RE ALL FIRED. AND DON'T BOTHER WITH UNEMPLOYMENT. I ALREADY TOLD THEM YOU ALL QUIT. I DON'T NEED YOU LOSERS.
LATER...
I'M DESPERATE, PLEASE COME WORK FOR ME OLD BUDDY. $12 AN HOUR MINIMUM, ALL CASH, AND A FREE BAG. PLEASE.
Well...
See, I don't treat my workers like shit.

Nearly 200 messengers signed this petition which was given to Flash management in April 2001...

San Francisco same-day messengers call upon the owners of Flash to enter negotiations on Flash striker's demands for higher rates and minimum pay-outs, detailed pay-out information, and benefits. We believe that a negotiated settlement is the only means to end the industry-wide strike against Flash. Unless and until such a settlement is reached, Flash will continue to be known, far and wide, as a scab messenger service.



WE'RE HUMANS NOT MACHINES
DEMAND HAZARD COMP. PAID SICK DAYS
AERO PAYS US ZERO!
$.90/HR IT'S CRIMINAL
Show ME The
Zap Workers on Strike!
BATTERY POINT ON STRIKE!
S-CARGO MEANS NO DOUGH!
DMS BAD
DMS ACTION UPDATE!
DMS ON STRIKE
LIES = DMS
SHOW YOUR SUPPORT! HONK!
labor
GUARDIAN
DMS COURIER STRIKE HEADS INTO FOURTH HISTORIC DAY
San Francisco Messenger Community Rallies in Support of Better Working Conditions
Bikes on strike
Overworked and underpaid, striking couriers at a San Francisco messenger service are facing unyielding bosses and violent strikebreakers. By A. C.
DMS ACTION UPDATE #2
The DMS Monster
Victories!
Winter Hazard Pay
Back Pay
A Fat Pay Raise!
When Pedestrians Attack (p. 4)
What Does DMS Stand For? (p. 5)
Secrets Revealed (p. 9)
Why Management Lies (p. 20)
EXCLUSIVE!
Lose weight in 5 seconds. Just drop that package
Citysplinter
FALL 2000
TIME TO STRIKE
YO DMS MESSENGERS!
SICK OF LOW PAY-OUTS? WEARY OF NO HOLIDAY PAY, NO RAINY DAY BONUSES, AND NO COMPENSATION FOR EQUIPMENT?
FED UP WITH MANAGEMENT'S POLICY OF DIVIDE AND CONQUER AND DECEIVE?
ISN'T IT TIME TO FACE DMS CORPORATION, POWERFUL AND UNIFIED?
Bicycle couriers end strike
DMS Corp. agrees to hold talks
San Francisco Chronicle
Bike messenger returning to wor

A WILDCAT STRIKE GOT THE GOODS

The week of January 12-19 of this year marked the second anniversary of the biggest and most successful San Francisco messenger strike ever. On the morning of January 12, 2000 the bosses at the notorious DMS Corp. got a surprise that no boss seeks but all should fear. Without warning, 37 of 38 bikers and walkers on the payroll as well as most of the in-town vehicle board hit management with a wildcat strike for better pay, working conditions, and power on-the-job.

The DMS strike lasted five days and rocked the San Francisco messenger world. It proved that no matter how hard courier bosses attempt to divide us against one another and keep us subordinate, messengers have the capacity to locate common interests, unite, and act collectively on our own behalf. Never again could the creeps that own messenger firms say or think that messengers are a bunch of stupid-ass slackers who'll never rise to the occasion and rise-up. While San Francisco DMS/CitySprint went out of business in July of 2001, this remains true. Nobody knows how many concessions have been quietly granted by messenger owners throughout the industry to avert similar turmoil on their turf.

There is much that can be said about the January 2000 wildcat strike (for instance: tensions between the ILWU and the strikers, violence on the picket-line, mistakes-made, divisions between drivers and walkers and bikers, personal bullshit...), but what stands out is that the strike demonstrated without a doubt that we as messengers can amass power against the messenger bosses. Once we have demonstrated our power, our demands (which until backed with action are merely requests to be ignored) are taken seriously.

Within hours of presenting our demands and announcing that we were officially on strike, we were told that the Vice President of Operations was being flown out from New York to discuss our "concerns". In the talks that were conducted on the second and third day, strikers conveyed the high levels of discontent and unity that existed.

We were told that they felt our pain and that improvements would be made pronto. The smug self-assuredness and sense of superiority that bosses everywhere feel regarding "their" workers wasn't apparent. They couldn't pretend that we need them and they don't need us. We had the power. They begged us to return to work.

The thing that has to be understood is that this wasn't an official union action leading to a contract. There were no "negotiations". We made clear what we wanted --through our demands and our action that supported those demands. They responded by promising that shit would change and pleading with us to go back to work, while simultaneously trying to ship out the delivery work to other messenger firms (with limited success) and by hiring scab walking messengers (with even less success).

On the end of the fifth day of the strike, fatigued but certain that we had shown our power, we decided to return to work with the caveat that improvements had better start being implemented or we'd strike again. Corporate Vice President Patrick Gallagher responded by saying: "Yes, we believe you."

In the months that followed the strike -and in the face of continued pressure, including a couple of short walk-offs in February --management made big concessions.

Winter pay was implemented. Retroactive payments of several hundred dollars were made to a bunch of messengers on the rookie B4 board who'd had money taken out of their checks prior to the strike. The B4 board, in accordance with strikers' demands, was abolished and those messengers were integrated onto the other boards. And payouts, particularly for work that's best performed by non-motorized messengers, increased dramatically. "Short-board" walkers and bikers received, under the cryptic Universal Pay Grid, a 60-70% pay hike, while the "long-board" bikers and in-town vehicle messengers got about a 20% pay increase. DMS/CitySprint bikers and walkers went from being some of the worst paid messengers in the city before the strike to being some of the best paid. And it didn't happen by asking politely.

The fact that DMS/CitySprint is now a dead letter doesn't mean that the victories and power that messengers amassed while it was still alive can't be replicated at other companies. Whenever messengers at one company -whether within or without a formal union structure -improve conditions, the field improves for all messengers. The courier bosses expect and depend on us to be too divided and cynical and exhausted to counter their exploitative crap. It feels so good to up-end their rotten little apple-cart. Just do it.

KNOWLEDGE ~~IGNORANCE~~ IS STRENGTH

While the war in Afghanistan is called the first front in the "war against terror", convincing evidence abounds which points toward more profitable motivations for driving out the Taliban and replacing them with a U.S. friendly government. Any serious discussion about the appropriate responses to the crimes of 9/11 should be informed by the following facts....

"The Great Game"

U.S. interests in the Middle East and Central Asia have much to do with the control of world oil. Oil is a finite resource with global production expected to reach a final peak around 2010. Massive disruptions to transportation and the economy will coincide with this final peak. Thus, whoever controls the largest remaining oil supply, will hold the most powerful reins on earth, determining which peoples and nations have access to it, its profits, and its products. Oil is used not only to fuel transport and industrial machinery, but also to make ferilizers and chemicals for food production, and to make medicines, plastics, insulation, computers, asphalt, inks & toners, paints, glues, solvents, CDs, trash bags, detergents, chewing gum, etc. The desire to control global oil resources largely explains the motivations behind the 1991 Gulf War and the 11 years of continuing sanctions against Iraq, the U.S. bombings of Yugoslavia, the tremendous U.S. military support for Israel, the U.S. "intervention" in Colombia, and so on.

Enter: Afghanistan

Taking a closer look at the Caspian Sea region in Central Asia provides great revelations on the current war with Afghanistan. Central Asia holds the largest untapped oil and gas reserves on the planet (valued at up to $5 trillion dollars). Currently, the only existing export routes from the region lead through Russia. Investors in Caspian oil and gas are interested in building alternative pipelines to Turkey and Europe, and especially to the rapidly growing Asian markets.

As of October 1997, CentGas, a Central Asian gas consortium led by Unocal Corporation had plans to build oil and natural gas pipelines from Turkmenistan through Afghanistan to Pakistan (on the Indian Ocean). On December 4, 1997, Unocal made an unsuccessful attempt to negotiate Taliban support for the pipeline when they invited the Taliban as guests to their Texas headquarters. A few months later, in February 1998, a VP from Unocal testified before the House Committee on International Relations and appealed for governmental support of their pipeline plans. He explained that a route through Afghanistan is the shortest and cheapest option for getting oil from the Caspian region to the Indian Ocean, but "our proposed pipeline cannot begin until a recognized government is in place".

"Conditions" are right for the pipeline

Now that the Taliban is bombed out of the way, the interim government is already making pipeline deals. Hamid Karzai, Afghanistan's new leader, is a former Unocal lobbyist and Bush's U.S. envoy to Afghanistan, Zalmay Khalizad, is a former Unocal representative who helped draw up plans for the orignal CentGas pipeline. It's not surprising then that, in early February 2002, Karzai and Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf agreed to revive the plan for a trans-Afghan pipeline from Turkmenistan to Pakistan.

Profiteers, Pipelines, and Presidents

If all these connections seem too much to bear, there's more. After his stint as Secretary of Defense under Bush Sr., and before becoming Vice President, Dick Cheney was the CEO of Halliburton, the major pipeline construction firm originally set to build the CentGas pipeline. The 1st President Bush is one of the directors of the privately-owned Carlyle Group, the 11th largest defense contractor in the U.S. In 1998 and 2000, the "former" president travelled to Saudi Arabia and met with the Saudi royal family and the bin Laden family, both of whom were major investors in the Carlyle Group. The bin Laden's silently sold their stake just after 9/11.

And let's not forget that throughout the 1980's the CIA (with the help of Saudi Arabia and Pakistan's ISI intelligence agency) created and funded the mujahideen "freedom fighter" movement, the predecessor to the Taliban and the Northern Alliance, in order fight the Soviets. The mujahideen were made up of fighters from all over the Middle East with different motivations for their participation. Over $1 billion dollars per year during the 1980's poured into the mujahideen forces from the U.S., the Saudis, and others (one of the main financiers, by the way, was Osama bin Laden). The U.S. provided them with hundreds of thousands of TONS of arms, including shoulder-fired Stinger anti-aircraft missiles. U.S. money was also used to support the schools of militant Islamic groups. After the Soviets withdrew in 1989, and the mujahideen finally defeated the Soviet-backed Afghan leader in 1992, the U.S. quickly tried to extricate itself from involvement in the region. This dramatic reversal of support is one of the reasons the U.S. is resented by Islamist groups in and around Afghanistan.

Where will it end?

The Mujahideen were tools used for a temporary, strategic purpose --to keep the Soviets from gaining power in such an oil rich region. And now we have seen the Taliban driven from Afghanistan, and a puppet regime installed, to support the larger goal of U.S. global supremacy. Oil is the currency of this supremacy, and the "war on terror" is the latest, and possibly the final, strategy being used to attain it. War, terror, and exploitation of peoples and resources are both what inspired and resulted from the acts of 9/11. It is not an exaggeration to say that this global "war on terrorism" may be a war without end. No one is safe in such a world. And who will do the fighting in this Orwellian war? Mostly, it will be the poor and working people in this country and around the globe.

Too many Americans are supporting the wrong methods to meet their desire for safety and security. No matter how many countries are bombed in the name of "stopping global terrorism", peace will not be found in war. War is the most extreme form of organized terror and only creates greater instability for all. Police and military personnel stationed on the borders, bridges, and streets of America will not prevent people willing to lose their lives to represent an opposition to U.S. policies and actions from attacking this land. As long as the U.S. military is warring with peoples or training and arming foreign militaries (Colombia, Mexico, Indonesia, Phillipines, Israel, etc.), Americans can expect to be the subject of violent responses. Those who flew into the Twin Towers did not do so out of "jealousy toward our freedoms and democracy", instead they were driven by a deep anger and sense of desperation toward U.S. policies and U.S. presence in the Middle East.

Without a real understanding of what is going on in the world, the spiral of fear, war, and terror will grow. Information is our first line of defense. We must ask questions and collectively work to steer ourselves and our nation toward a sustainable and peaceful world. The future of life on this planet depends on it.

"ONE CANNOT WAGE WAR UNDER PRESENT CONDITIONS WITHOUT THE SUPPORT OF PUBLIC OPINION, WHICH IS TREMENDOUSLY MOLDED BY THE PRESS AND OTHER FORMS OF PROPAGANDA."
— GENERAL DOUGLAS MACARTHUR

This is the information age, information is out there.
This article was found on the internet in March '02. Sources include: [americanfreepress.net/10_01_01.html] ["Enron: Ultimate agent of the American empire" --onlinejournal.com] [From the Wilderness --copvcia.com] ["War Against the Planet" --zmag.org] ["Pakistan, Afghan leaders agree to revive pipeline" --biz.yahoo.com/rf/020208/is1229096_1.html] [Wall Street Journal, Sept. 27, 2001] [unocal.com/uclnews/98news/centgas.html] [runningonempty.org] [British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), Dec. 4, 1997] [house.gov/international_relations/105th/ap/wsap212982.html] [indymedia.org] [the movie: "Cover Up: The Iran Contra Affair"] [Killing Hope: U.S. Military and CIA interventions since World War II by William Blum] [unol.org]

PORTLAND MESSENGERS FLEXING THEIR MUSCLES

Messengers at Transerv Systems in Portland, OR are taking direct action to organize their workplace and make gains. They won't allow bureaucracy and legal manueverings to kill their organizing drive. It didn't start out this way, but the classic moves taken by Transerv management have made them realize that the usual avenue taken by unions --the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB)-- is full of pot-holes only for the workers to fall into.

On December 10th, 2001, about a dozen Transerv workers took a few minutes from their workday to pay a visit to management. Workers asked to set up a company-wide meeting to discuss a list of grievances including, among other things, disclosure of how employees get paid and job security. Management refused, stating that the issues only related to bike messengers and would be discussed with bikers only. At which point, the workers returned to the streets, and filed for a union election with the NLRB over lunch.

December 18th was the first payday since the announcement of the union campaign, and despite the fact that management had repeatedly refused to even discuss demands, many workers' paychecks reflected real changes. One of the key demands by the drivers and bikers alike was for commission reports to be distributed with paychecks, showing work done and amount paid for each package delivered. Many believed that if management was held accountable by itemizing how they paid workers, wages would increase. Despite management's refusal (at that time) to supply reports, many bikers and drivers found themselves with record-breaking paychecks --up to two dollars an hour more than they had ever made at Transerv!!

This organizing campaign began germinating over a year ago, when frustrated workers had conversations with representatives from the Teamsters and the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU), separately. After some research it became clear that neither the Teamsters nor the ILWU was the union for couriers.

Workers were also introduced to a different type of union, with a different approach, and began discussing the benefits of democratic, direct action-oriented industrial unionism. That's when the benefits and value of organizing with the IWW became apparent, and workers began to join up.

It should be noted that this is the third organizing campaign in the same day service industry involving Portland's bike messengers in ten years. The first two involved the ILWU and failed for two main reasons: (1) An over-reliance on elections and the NLRB, while ignoring the potential of the collective power of workers themselves; and (2) A failure to organize truly industrially, that is, organizing all workers --couriers and office people-- at many companies throughout the industry. When all types of messengers and office workers are organized together they are not susceptible to management's predictable divide and conquer tactics.

In early February 2002, Transerv management did what any bosses would do, they tried to prevent the unionization of its workers. In order to skew the union election in their favor, management hired expensive union-busting lawyers and crafted a bargaining unit that was sure to ruin the organizing efforts. Using a very common tactic, management stacked the employee list against the union by including a large number of contracted workers who work on an irregular basis. The NLRB, as usual, accepted this list. So instead of fighting this anti-worker set-up, Transerv workers withdrew from the election, and decided that direct pressure on the streets is what will win improvements. When the NLRB was involved in the campaign, decisions were out of the workers' control. Waiting for an external body to decide their fate killed a lot of the spirit needed to make gains.

Now that the NLRB is no longer involved, workers are pursuing a strategy of direct action --facing the boss on grounds they control. Workers have been taking their legally guaranteed ten minute breaks simultaneously and have been marching into the bosses office to demand meetings during work hours. On Feb. 27, these tactics proved effective when management agreed to supply commission reports within two months "once the computers are fixed". Workers will be watching to make sure this promise becomes a reality. After taking back control of their campaign, Transerv workers have regained their collective strength and power.

I ★ W ★ W
MT ★ WU

Fundraising is currently needed for strike and hardship, and funds can be sent to: The IU 540 Fund, care of Red and Black Cafe, 2138 SE Division St, Portland, OR 97202 IU 540 encourages and will support fellow couriers organizing in Portland and elsewhere. IU 540 can be contacted at: IU540@IWWPDX.org or 503-231-5488

15 years on the job and still going. oh yeah.
811, we got reports you werent wearing your uniform. youre fired.
What?! you can't do that. youre in for some real trouble boss dudes.
Whatever. And if anyone else can hear, the rest of you bums are now independent contractors
You'll be seeing some direct action real soon once the union gets a whiff of this poop.
snicker
Laugh all you want. We're going to respond in force with an NLRB filing!
You do that.
STAY TUNED! CONTINUED NEXT YEAR...

Motorola manufactures many of the plastic components inside mines, making the deadly devices undetectable by metal-detectors. The US sells mines at $3 a pop while they cost up to $1000 per mine to detect and dismantle.

I am the greatest beer drinker in this city. Noone can match my superior alcoholism.
Prove it Buddy.
For this demonstration, I will need 20 cans of BUD and 12 bottles of BUD Ice. Then you may anoint me Champion of Beers.
What?
Man, i can't support your drinking habit. Go get your own beers Mr. Kohol, first name Al.
Hey, I just want a beer. My roommate keeps drinking my BUD Dry. Can you atleast spare a dollar? I'm having withdrawal.
Its your lucky day. Here's a Bud Light.
BROUGHT TO YOU BY: BUD, KING OF BEERS

I'M SO GLAD WERE GOING TO INVADE THEM. SHOULD HAVE TAKEN CARE OF THEM LAST TIME.
LIKE YOU ARE SUCH AN AMAZING PATRIOT. MAY GOD BLESS YOU.
IF ONLY MORE PEOPLE WOULD SUPPORT WAR, THE WORLD WOULD BE MUCH SAFER.
YOU CLEARLY SUPPORT THE DEATH PENALTY
DUDE FRY EM.
DO YOU BELIEVE IN LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT?

"The high office of President has been used to foment a plot to destroy the American's freedom, and before I leave office I must inform the citizen of his plight." -- John F. Kennedy at Columbia University, 10 days before his assassination.

a vision to strive toward

We are messengers. We're in an envious position. Messengers around the world desire what we've created here in San Francisco. A force. A community. A sustainable strategy. They are impressed by how well we keep the money we make within the messenger scene.

Our coffee cart at the wall is not just a middle-finger to the 13 nearby Starbucks, but it provides work for riders recovering from injuries as well. Our store-front space on Howard Street really brought us all together. We now have our own place to meet, party, organize, hang out, and hide from the rain. The bike shop connected to it is a true example of collective and intelligent living. We buy for and sell to ourselves--keeping the costs low. A messenger owned and operated all-in-one stop, a dream of many a delivering worker-bee.

We simply got so sick of being jerked around by our bosses that we threw off their reins and joined forces, forming different companies that work with one another, all messenger-run. Because we work more efficiently like this, we're all able to log fewer hours on the job. As an industry working together, we set the standards. We decide what prices to charge, what discounts to give (if we do), and the policies by which we'll work.

Because we all feel part of a community that respects us, we respect it. Meetings are well attended. Couriers are well aware of the issues at any given time and because we know that we're all affected by any decisions made, we participate in their making.

We're organized, and not only in the business sense, but on the street as well. We've become a model for other workers. They seek the kind of power we have taken for ourselves. Some of us spend time helping lobby guards, receptionists, and other delivery persons realize their power. Because our jobs bring us all over, we have lots of opportunities to connect with other workers.

Community groups and others pushing for justice and shared power come to us for our support in their street actions and challenges to the Man. Our knowledge of the city -it's ins and outs, our ability to move quickly and to work together, and our possession of radio, phone, and pager communications, make us of great assistance. Our aid has inspired others to be more daring, and to do so with enhanced tactics. In return for our services, we gain access to computers, copiers, and other resources that these organizations possess.

Some of us have used our visibility and influence to challenge transit and road policies. Cities all over are watching our success in banning personal automobiles from vast portions of the city. The public transit system has been greatly expanded and the vehicles are powered with renewable fuels. The streets of SF look a little like Shanghai, as all those who always wanted to pedal around finally feel safe enough to hit the road (so to speak).

San Francisco is a different city because of us. The transformation continues. And it all started with a vision!!

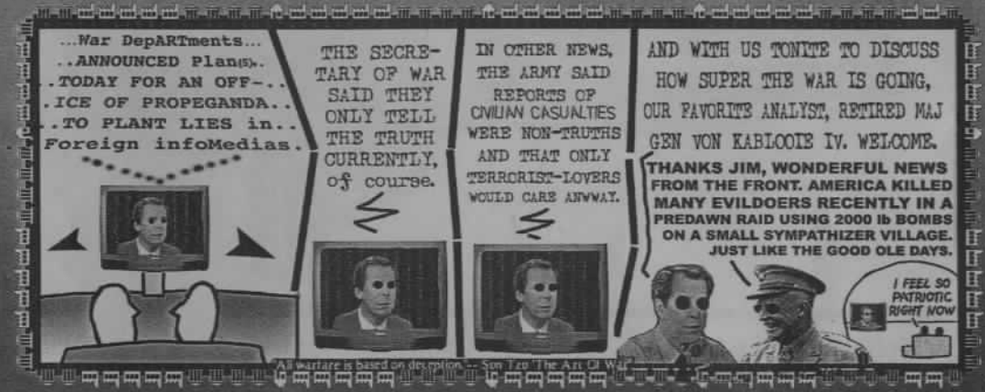
2015.049

to the formulation of the Central Intelligence Agency back in '47, if I had known it would become the American Gestapo." -- Harry S Truman (1961)

"I never would have agreed

HMM, THIS DELIVERY IS OUT OF MY WAY.
WHERE ARE ALL THE HUMANS?
THEY ARE HERE.
WHERE?
UNDERGROUND
EVERYTHING IS MONITORED + CAPTURED ON DVD.
A CAMERA IS RECORDING YOU 93% OF YOUR WAKING LIFE... WHILE YOU WORK, SHOP, EAT... AND THINK.
BOB, CRACK THE CODE & RUN THE PROGRAM. HE'S ON THE EDGE

"THE INDIVIDUAL IS HANDICAPPED BY COMING FACE TO FACE WITH A CONSPIRACY SO MONSTROUS HE CANNOT BELIEVE IT EXISTS." -- J. EDGAR HOOVER


...War DepARTments... ..ANNOUNCED Plan(s). .TODAY FOR AN OFF-.. .ICE OF PROPEGANDA.. ..TO PLANT LIES in.. Foreign infoMedias.
THE SECRETARY OF WAR SAID THEY ONLY TELL THE TRUTH CURRENTLY, of course.
IN OTHER NEWS, THE ARMY SAID REPORTS OF CIVILIAN CASUALTIES WERE NON-TRUTHS AND THAT ONLY TERRORIST-LOVERS WOULD CARE ANYWAY.
AND WITH US TONITE TO DISCUSS HOW SUPER THE WAR IS GOING, OUR FAVORITE ANALYST, RETIRED MAJ GEN VON KABLOOIE IV. WELCOME.
THANKS JIM, WONDERFUL NEWS FROM THE FRONT. AMERICA KILLED MANY EVILDOERS RECENTLY IN A PREDAWN RAID USING 2000 lb BOMBS ON A SMALL SYMPATHIZER VILLAGE. JUST LIKE THE GOOD OLE DAYS.
I FEEL SO PATRIOTIC RIGHT NOW
"All warfare is based on deception." -- Sun Tzu "The Art of W

Hey, whats going on in the industry?
Lets. pizza Party on thursday. Camping trip next month. Rock show this friday, $4.
Any organizing for better conditions? Better wages? Anything?
Ummm...
We have no time for helping workers help themselves. Well, maybe if they give us our due.
But your website says you want to "stand up to the entire industry with our demands".
We have a website?. Hey look, when I ran for office, I thought it would be cool to run meetings like a little Napoleon. You voted for me right?
Uhh.. well...
Whatever, I'm voting to go to the pub. See you next meeting rookie.